

STEVE COHEN
9TH DISTRICT, TENNESSEE

2404 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

TELEPHONE: (202) 225-3265
FAX: (202) 225-5663

CLIFFORD DAVIS/ODELL HORTON
FEDERAL BUILDING
167 NORTH MAIN STREET
SUITE 369
MEMPHIS, TN 38103

TELEPHONE: (901) 544-4131
FAX: (901) 544-4329
www.cohen.house.gov

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4209

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May 11, 2016

Mr. Ronald D. Anzalone
Director, Office of Preservation Initiatives
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
401 F Street NW, Suite 308
Washington DC 20001-2637

Dear Mr. Anzalone,

I write to you to recommend Orange Mound in Memphis, Tennessee be designated as a Preserve America Neighborhood. The story of the African-American experience in Memphis and the United States would be incomplete without it.

Orange Mound was founded in 1890 on the grounds of a former plantation as the nation's first community for African-Americans by the African-Americans that made their home there. Many of those same families still live there generations later.

They built businesses that thrive to this day. The Orange Mound Grill has been serving some of the finest traditional American cuisine in the nation for almost 70 years. The Fred L. Davis Insurance Agency, founded by the first African-American member of the Independent Insurance Agents of America, still insures the homes, belongings, and automobiles of people in the community.

Melrose High School, founded as a Rosenwald School in 1918, has long been the pride of the community. The Melrose Golden Wildcats football team packs the bleachers every night while their award-winning marching band and cheerleaders keep the fans fired up. NFL players, NBA players, an Olympic Gold Medalist, businessmen, community leaders, musicians, and artists have all worn the Melrose maroon and gold.

Several significant houses of worship are found in Orange Mound, including the historic Mt. Pisgah C.M.E. Church, which provided support and assistance for activists jailed during our nation's struggle for Civil Rights.

Orange Mound would benefit a great deal from being designated a Preserve America neighborhood as its leaders and residents work to protect and celebrate their heritage while building a future that will keep the community strong and vibrant for generations to come.

Thank you for your time.

As always, I remain,

Most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve Cohen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Steve Cohen
Member of Congress